



# Management of District-Owned Lands

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Project and Lands Committee Meeting  
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# Land Stewardship Program

## Land Stewardship Functions

- Management responsibilities for 409,844 acres of District property, 52% of District land ownership
- Management of conservation lands for hydrologic and environmental values and assure project lands are maintained until the property is needed for construction
- Provide nature based public use opportunities consistent with purpose of land acquisition





# Land Stewardship Program

## Land Management Tools

- Prescribed burning
- Exotic plant control
- Mechanical vegetation control
- Prescribed cattle grazing based on site conditions
- Land management strategy document prepared for properties leased for grazing



# Land Stewardship Program

## Cattle Grazing as a Land Management Tool



- Cost effective means to control non-native pasture grasses and herbaceous vegetation
- Often used in combination with prescribed burning and exotic plant control activities
- Utilized primarily on properties and plant communities previously altered by past agricultural practices



# Land Stewardship Program

## Cattle Grazing Property Types

### Conservation Lands (30 leases on 55,128 acres)

- Management goal is to preserve and protect hydrologic function and conservation values of property
- BMP and lease requirements designed to control exotic grasses without impacting native plant communities/water quality
- Pasture improvement activities (fertilizing and clearing) inconsistent with management goals prohibited
- Properties open to public use including hunting (KCOL, KICCO, Allapattah)



# Land Stewardship Program

## Cattle Grazing Property Types

### Conservation Lands – Allapattah Flats Management Area (21,000 acres)

- Former cattle ranch acquired in 2002-2003 as a CERP natural water storage area
- Acquired in partnership with Martin County and Natural Resource Conservation Service (restricts lessee's ability to receive EQIP grant funds)
- NRCS funded hydrologic restoration project initiated in 2016 to restore hydrology and wetland plant communities
- Current stocking rates to be re-evaluated upon completion of restoration activities





# Land Stewardship Program



C-23/24 Project Area



Pasture Mowing

## Cattle Grazing Property Types

### **Project Lands (17 leases on 18,167 acres)**

- Acquired for construction of water resource projects
- Low environmental resource value
- Management focused on site security, interior drainage, general custodial functions
- Pasture maintenance activities such as mowing are generally permitted, other more intensive practices may be authorized on a case by case basis

# Land Stewardship Program

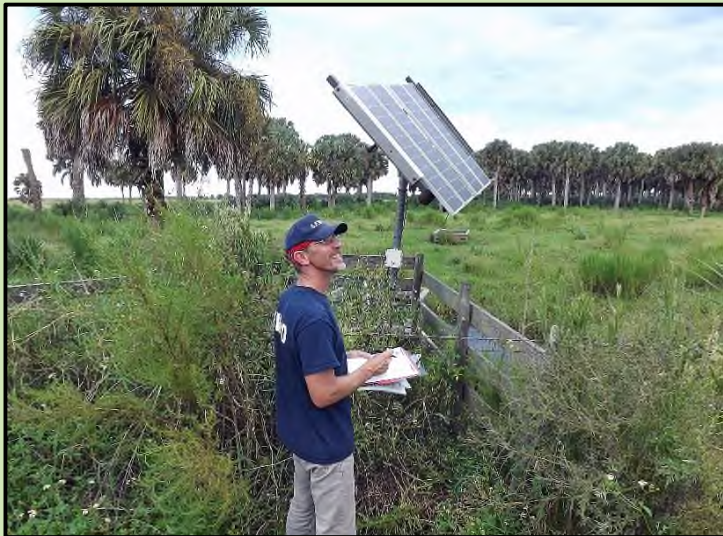
## Grazing Lease Administration Land Stewardship Support to Real Estate Leasing Unit

- Evaluation of properties for grazing suitability
- Input to lease documents
- Prepare land management strategy document
- Technical/logistical support
- Lessee's point of contact for field activities and operations
- Lease compliance monitoring





# Land Stewardship Program



## Lease Compliance Monitoring

- Lease compliance monitoring conducted every 6 months to assure compliance with lease conditions
- Compliance monitoring includes evaluation of site conditions, infrastructure maintenance, and BMP implementation (in coordination with Everglades Regulation Bureau)
- Compliance monitoring results documented in semi-annual lease inspection reports provided to Leasing Unit

# Land Stewardship Program

## Summary

- Grazing is a cost effective land management tool to control non-native grasses and herbaceous vegetation
- Grazing leases are developed and managed to benefit the land resource
- Grazing lease requirements and BMP compliance is monitored closely to assure resource management benefits are achieved





# Land Stewardship Program

